

GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
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A. CALL TO ORDER BY PRESIDING OFFICER

Chair Shane T. Bemis called the Gresham Redevelopment Commission (GRDC) meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. on the 7th day of July 2009 in the Council Chambers, Public Safety & Schools Bldg., 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham, Oregon.

COMMISSION PRESENT: SHANE T. BEMIS, Chair
SHIRLEY CRADDICK
JOSH FUHRER
CAROL NIELSEN-HOOD
PAUL WARR-KING
DAVID WIDMARK

COMMISSION ABSENT: DICK STRATHERN, Vice Chair

STAFF PRESENT: ALICE ROUYER, GRDC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MIKE ABBATÉ, URBAN DESIGN & PLANNING SERVICES DIRECTOR
MICHAEL PARKHURST, ASSOCIATE CITY PLANNER
RICK FAUS, SENIOR ASSISTANT CITY ATTORNEY
JOHN DORST, ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEPUTY DIRECTOR
CECILLE TURLEY, RECORDING SECRETARY

Chair Bemis welcomed new Commissioner Josh Fuhrer and announced that Commission Vice Chair Dick Strathern was on vacation and not in attendance.

1. INSTRUCTIONS TO CITIZENS ON SIGNING UP FOR PUBLIC TESTIMONY REGARDING AGENDA AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Commissioner Shirley Craddick read instructions.

B. CITIZEN AND COMMUNITY GROUP COMMENTS FOR AGENDA (EXCEPT PUBLIC HEARING) AND NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Lori Stegmann, Gresham resident gave comment. She said she is the Vice Chair of the Rockwood Business Coalition (RBC). The RBC submitted a letter of opinion to the Commission on the proposed design plans for interim uses for the Cultural Marketplace site. She would like to introduce Michael Orelove. She met Mr. Orelove through the Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Orelove is an astronomer of sorts who has some fantastic ideas about a potential planet walk that got her very excited. Her idea is instead of a soccer field, use that space and put down a ground cover, such as cedar chips that will not require maintenance, and have a planet walk. It could be scaled to any size and may be able to be incorporated into the permanent development if there were a desire. The Satellite Restaurant was a mainstay in the Rockwood area. Incorporate the planet walk idea with Satellite Rockwood or something.

Michael Orelove, Gresham resident gave comment. He provided a handout that describes some of the community projects he has done previously. (Handout attached as Exhibit A.) He said where he lived in Juno, Alaska for 33 years he created a mile-long planet walk along a paved trail. He painted the solar system with the planets their relative size and distance from each other. School classes and other non-profit organizations were organized to paint the planets so not only was it for the community,

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it was created by the community. Mr. Orelove described some of his other projects, and said he has books with photos and would be glad to meet to discuss his ideas in more detail.

Chair Bemis thanked Mr. Orelove and called for questions.

Commissioner Paul Warr-King said he sat with Mr. Orelove for about an hour and went over his projects. He is an amazing guy who has contributed a lot to the communities where he has projects and he could do the same for Gresham.

Commissioner Carol Nielsen-Hood thanked Mr. Orelove for presenting his ideas and said she likes the creativity. It is what the Commission is looking for.

Curt Hugo, Gresham resident gave comment. He said he is Treasurer of the Rockwood Business Coalition (RBC) and owner of Dutch Bros. Coffee across from the Rockwood Community Office. He is here as a follow-up to the letter of opinion the RBC sent the Commission regarding the proposed interim uses for the Cultural Marketplace site. The RBC is concerned about the \$1-2 million cost. It feels it would not be the best use of a limited pool of resources, whether for a park, soccer field, or anything else. It is also concerned about pulling resources from the budget for permanent development to use on interim uses. In addition, if something is given and then taken away, it feels like a one-two punch.

Chair Bemis read into the record written comment received from the Rockwood Business Coalition Board on Agenda Item No. D-1 dated July 6, 2009 (Attached as Exhibit B); written comment from Kathy Amidon on Agenda Item No. D-1 dated June 30, 2009 (Attached as Exhibit C); and written comment from Kathy Amidon on Agenda Item No. D-2 dated July 1, 2009 (Attached as Exhibit D.)

C. CONSENT AGENDA

1. NEW INDUSTRIES GRANT APPLICATION: SUNMARK PROPERTIES, LLC.

2. APARTMENT REHABILITATION GRANT APPLICATION: PINE MEADOWS APARTMENTS

3. APPOINTMENTS TO THE GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEE: SANFORD JONES AND ROSEANNE ZALES

4. GRESHAM REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES: APRIL 2 AND MAY 5, 2009

Chair Bemis said he would like to remove Consent Agenda Item C-3. He called for a motion on the remaining items.

Motion was made by Commissioner David Widmark and seconded by Commissioner Shirley Craddick **TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS C-1, C-2, AND C-4.** The motion passed as follows:

BEMIS	YES	STRATHERN	ABSENT
CRADDICK	YES	WARR-KING	YES
FUHRER	YES	WIDMARK	YES
NIELSEN-HOOD	YES		

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Chair Bemis recognized Sanford Jones and Roseanne Zales and thanked them for their willingness to serve on the GRDC Advisory Committee (GRDCAC).

Motion by was made by Commissioner Shirley Craddick and seconded by Commissioner Paul Warr-King **TO APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA ITEM C-3**. The motion passed as follows:

BEMIS	YES	STRATHERN	ABSENT
CRADDICK	YES	WARR-KING	YES
FUHRER	YES	WIDMARK	YES
NIELSEN-HOOD	YES		

D. COMMISSION BUSINESS

1. CULTURAL MARKETPLACE INTERIM USES

Michael Parkhurst, Associate City Planner gave an update interim uses and said staff is looking for feedback on the interim use ideas. (PowerPoint attached as Exhibit E.)

Chair Bemis said he heard the community loud and clear about the amount of money for the proposed interim uses, which in his mind takes many things off the table. What does clean up the entire site mean?

Ms. Rouyer, GRDC Executive Director said she did not get a clear definition from the RBC, but did hear some minor improvements to the parking lot and installing the plaza, which would make the site appear maintained. There continues to be some interest to put grass down on the gravel or at least level it out some so it does not look so messy. She believes they are looking for minor improvements like Mr. Orelove's ideas and just having a place for people to gather and have active use of the site without too much investment.

Mr. Abbaté, Urban Design and Planning Director said later in the meeting he will talk about what could be done on the fringe. Much of that can make a big difference in the appearance of the site because if the street and perimeter are improved, the interior is not quite as visible.

Chair Bemis asked Mr. Abbaté if he had a cost estimate on sod for the gravel area.

Mr. Abbaté answered \$100,000 to \$150,000 if irrigated, plus maintenance.

Commissioner Craddick commented that she attended the RBC meeting that day and liked the comments made. The RBC's letter outlines what she heard. She likes the plaza idea, but how will it influence future development: will it be an impediment or an asset?

Mr. Abbaté replied that 185th to the realigned 187th is a long block with no breaks. From an economic and access perspective, it will be a challenge to develop the complete frontage. The intent is to put the plaza in a place that makes logical sense. With the plaza centered within that block, it allows for two good-sized, half-acre, 22,000-square-foot development parcels on either side that could be open to the plaza, thereby taking advance of the plaza long-term as the spine between the two anchors that would be located on the corners. Something different could come it, but if pavers are used, they could be removed and reused.

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Commissioner Widmark said the plaza design is pleasant, but he questions its purpose as a gathering space. There already are issues around that in the area. If an ethnic market goes in, he could see other things that lend to that use. He is also concerned about the cost. He likes the idea, but does not strongly support it.

Mr. Abbaté commented that the rendering is not a design, but a placeholder. In reviewing the chronology of the site, it is apparent that the public desires a gathering space. Programming on the site has not been identified and needs to be determined.

Chair Bemis asked if staff has a sense from its meetings with the community that if grass or a plaza were installed, that there are champions willing to program the site and help provide oversight. He does not think the City has the expertise or the budget to do it.

Ms. Rouyer replied that a true champion has not yet emerged on any of these uses, except on some ideas regarding the planet walk and some others.

Chair Bemis said he is not as concerned with maintenance as he is with programming. It seems someone will need to program the site on a regular basis. Has there been talk with the Rockwood Neighborhood Association or the RBC to try to set some programming for the site?

Ms. Rouyer said not yet, but one option would be to put out a purpose statement that could be shopped around to various groups.

Commissioner Nielsen-Hood commented that she never imagined the interim uses would be so expensive. She is against spending that type of money. She agrees with the RBC that there needs to be a better use of the site and likes Mr. Orelove's ideas, but she would like for the community to bring the Commission some ideas that are as creative and less expensive than what has been proposed.

Commissioner Craddick said she likes the idea of moving ahead with the plaza and would like to look at leveling the gravel to ground level because she has heard many comments from the community that the grade is higher on the west end and not surfaced to road level. Once leveled, seed it, but do not irrigate and proceed with Mr. Orelove's solar system idea on the grassy area. She is not supportive of the ideas on art installations because it is too soon; the art would be vulnerable to vandals. When more eyes are on the site, the art will have more protection.

Chair Bemis asked if it would be a waste of money to seed and not irrigate.

Mr. Abbaté replied that decent soil is needed for grass and if not irrigated, it would probably revert to a weed patch in a couple of years. The gravel area is a flat development pad and is level with the surrounding grade, but the street drops down at 185th so if re-graded, the result would be a slope that is no longer level. It would not look much different than it does now and would be less appealing to the development community.

Commissioner Craddick asked for suggestions on other surfaces that might be better than the grass.

Mr. Abbaté replied that what is there now is probably has the least impact in terms of maintenance.

Commissioner Warr-King said there is a need for some type of gathering place in the area. Portland Lutheran School has to chase people off at night because they go there to sit and have a picnic.

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Maybe have a basic plaza with some tables and swings to provide a place to go and do something enjoyable in the evening.

Chair Bemis said the existing parking lot could be used to make a plaza. Plantings and a couple of picnic tables could be added around the plaza, along with a swing set or other activity for a children's play area, and some grass to support the play area. It seems that would cost far less than \$450,000.

Mr. Abbaté said that could be done at less cost. Staff will research how a plaza might work there. Adding some trees and a little bit of lawn area could make substantial changes and get to what Commissioner Warr-King suggested.

Commissioner Nielsen-Hood said the cost estimate for the play area is \$100,000. She suggests the play equipment be just a slide and a couple of swings.

Chair Bemis said he thinks what he is hearing from the community is clean it up at the lowest possible cost and make it some sort of amenity that could be used. Are there ways to divide the site using trees or other plantings to minimize the amount of area the public can access that still cleans it up?

Mr. Abbaté said a storm water swale that limits the northern expansion and directs rainwater or something could be created.

Commissioner Widmark said Mr. Orelove's planet walk idea could work on the gravel area. It would be an inexpensive activity and consume some space. Just clean it up and put in a walking path. He cannot see spending this type of money on interim uses.

Commissioner Fuhrer commented that he recognizes the challenges this issue presents, but just cleaning it up is not good enough. He approaches the issue from the perspective of what is the most compelling story that can be told about the site at the lowest cost. Mr. Orelove's idea is worthy of consideration. He would like to hear others, as well. Many of these uses seem piecemeal and do not tell one overriding great story. Given the cost, they should. He has some issues with the plaza. He recognizes there would be developable parcels on either side, but spending \$450,000 on uses that limits future development when it is not known what that development will be is problematic. He is not opposed to a plaza per se, but given how deeply it pushes into the center of site, it could be problematic for future development. In addition, developers may not want to use pavers for the plaza, but some other surface that is a lot cheaper. He suggests staff look at problem solving around these issues. He also concurs with Commissioner Craddick's comment that the public art would be at risk.

Chair Bemis said more research is needed on the issue since everyone has a different definition for cleaning up site, other than clean up the litter and graffiti, trim back the shrubbery, and maintain a nice appearance.

Ms. Rouyer said she could ask the GRDCAC that question to get some ideas and would come back to the Commission in August with a proposal.

Chair Bemis asked the Commission if that was an acceptable approach and if it wished to direct staff to work with Mr. Orelove to incorporate his ideas into the site.

There was consensus.

2. ROCKWOOD TOWN CENTER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

Michael Parkhurst, Associate City Planner presented the staff report and said staff is looking for feedback on co-locating the 188th MAX platforms and realigning 187th/188th. (PowerPoint attached as Exhibit F.)

Commissioner Widmark said co-locating the MAX platforms combined with realigning 187th/188th makes the Rockwood Triangle far more developable and it would create new synergy.

Commissioner Craddick asked if the work could begin this year.

John Dorst, Environmental Services Deputy Director said staff anticipates doing the projects simultaneously. It would save about \$265,000 to do them simultaneously since relocating signals and other work is involved.

Commissioner Nielsen-Hood said she favors co-location. It makes sense to get off MAX and go directly into the Cultural Marketplace property. If that is how it is designed, how many feet will it cut into the site?

Mr. Dorst replied about 15 feet and the design includes a wider, boulevard-style sidewalk, which has to be done anyway. Regarding the 187th/188th realignment, there is advantage in that it would not affect other properties and would help with the Burnside alignment.

Commissioner Fuhrer said from a development perspective, realignment makes a lot of sense so he is very much in favor of that approach. It opens up the possibilities on the site and creates synergy, which is lacking currently. Is there a plan for disposition of the abandoned street?

Ms. Rouyer said there has been discussion with Mr. Hopkins of the Hopkins family who own the tip of the Triangle. They are supportive of both co-location and realignment. She believes State law dictates that half of the street would go to the City and half would go to the Hopkins family. In the long term, there is interest for the land to go fully to the Hopkins family. Details would have to be worked out, but Mr. Hopkins is supportive of continuing the conversation.

Mr. Warr-King thanked Tri-Met for the Ziba Design outline. He said he agrees with co-location and realignment. Regarding the design for the MAX platforms, once again he will raise the issue of control and how the collection of tickets will be handled.

Chair Bemis called for further comments or questions.

There were none.

Chair Bemis said he believes there is clear consensus.

3. CULTURAL MARKETPLACE REDEVELOPMENT NEXT STEPS

Ms. Rouyer presented the staff report and said staff is looking for feedback on proposed ideas for a workshop on next steps for the Cultural Marketplace site. (PowerPoint attached as Exhibit G.)

Commissioner Craddick commented that before the Commission proceeds with an Oregon Solutions process, it first needs to review at the Aspirational Plan (Plan) to determine if it is still the right plan for

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the site because she is hearing and agrees that the Cultural Marketplace focus is no longer appropriate and needs to be modified. The work Ziba Design did on the 188th MAX station redevelopment project hit it on the head. Go back to roots of Rockwood, enhance that history, and move away from the term Cultural Marketplace. Her thought would be a one- to two-hour Commission retreat to learn if the Commission agrees. The next concern is how to involve the public to learn what they want to see. The Oregon Solutions process is expensive and not the best use of the money.

Chair Bemis said he does not believe the Oregon Solutions process gets to the real issue. Given the economic downturn, what is needed is development advice on how to be in the best possible position for development when the economy does turnaround. Some of the policy questions that would be asked in the workshop are crystal ball questions.

Commissioner Nielsen-Hood said she has reservations with the Oregon Solutions process. How can plans be made when nothing is happening due to the lack of financing? She suggests the Commission spend a couple of hours reviewing the Plan, and refine and enhance it as needed.

Commissioner Widmark said he agrees. He would rather hold back because the market is the bottom line that will determine what goes on the site; however, has no problem reviewing the Plan.

Commissioner Craddick said she would like the Commission to spend time considering the types of uses it wants to see on the site. One of the challenges working with Williams & Dame Development (WDD) was that we each looked at WDD's proposal from a different perspective in terms of our aspirations for the site. What about collaborating with Multnomah County to move the post office to the site if the City is readdressed, which hopefully will happen? Is there a desire for a full police facility there, a precinct, or a combination? That is the type of conversation she would like to have, after which some of it is taken to the public.

Commissioner Warr-King commented that citizens were not included when the Plan was developed so if the plan is to hold a workshop, input from others is needed. He agrees the time could be cut back, but he would like representation from the RBC or the GRDCAC.

Commissioner Fuhrer said he concurs with Commissioner Warr-King. The public's voice should be the first priority in determining what is developed. If the question is what to develop on the site, Portland State University's (PSU) Urban Studies and Planning Department has a real estate development program. One of the courses is a semester-long workshop devoted entirely to one site and the development challenges present on the site, and proposing possible solutions to those challenges. The process is shepherded by development professionals in the community. The result is a comprehensive set of possible development opportunities that are not tied down to one option. In contrast to the Oregon Solutions process, the PSU process would come at little to no cost.

Chair Bemis said a development summit about the Cultural Marketplace property is a much different discussion with different principles than a discussion about Rockwood and all the issues it is facing and how to fix them. Regarding the Plan, not everyone was happy with it, but he thinks there was a lot of communication with the public on it and disagrees with the comment that the public was not involved. He is not sure the Plan is bad and maybe the term Cultural Marketplace is wrong, but the issue is what the market is going to do. That does not mean the Commission is willing to settle for substandard quality because it has said no. He would like the discussion focused on development of the Cultural Marketplace versus all things Rockwood. If the issue is about development and how to be in the best position to generate the most tax revenue, it is not social services, libraries, and post offices, while they might fit. The community fought against putting the East County Justice Center on the site because it would not generate tax revenue. If the intent is to discuss development, the Commission can discuss

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development and not answer policy questions that affect all of Rockwood, unless that is what the Commission desires. If so, a clear, refined direction is needed in terms of what we would be asking from the community. He suggests the Commission send the issue to the GRDCAC for consideration and a recommendation on next steps.

Commissioner Widmark said he agrees with Chair Bemis that development of the Plan did involve the public because he attended two meetings where it was actively discussed. The Commission is a public entity and is responsible for what goes on the site and could do fine right now without an Oregon Solutions process.

Commissioner Bemis said in summary, he is hearing there is a desire to revisit the Plan as a Commission to determine if it is still relevant or if changes are needed and to involve the GRDCAC in the process, either separately and simultaneously or in a joint GRDC/GRDCAC workshop. Does that work for staff?

Ms. Rouyer said yes. Staff can prepare a draft agenda to bring back for Commission consideration. What is the timeline?

Chair Bemis said August or September, but preferably December and distribute the Plan to the GRDC and GRDCAC in order to prepare. Is there consensus?

There was consensus.

4. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Commissioner Widmark said he has concerns about the current GRDC meeting schedule following the 1st and 3rd Council meetings and would like to go back to the third Thursday at 4:00 p.m. meeting schedule if possible. He can only make one meeting a month on this schedule because he has a conflict with the Housing Authority of Portland Board meetings he attends.

Chair Bemis said he believes the original intent of doubling up the meetings was to go through a process to get to where the Commission is now so he would be delighted to go back to the 3rd Thursday at 4:00 p.m. schedule. Is there consensus?

There was consensus.

E. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

Hearing no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Following adjournment, the Commission participated in an Executive Session pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(e) – Real Property Transactions, ORS 192.660(2)(f) – Public Records Exempt by Law from Public Inspection, and ORS 192.660(2)(h) – Legal Counsel, at 9:15 p.m. in the Council Chamber Conference Room, Public Safety & Schools Bldg., 1333 NW Eastman Parkway, Gresham, OR

SHANE T. BEMIS,
CHAIR

Respectfully submitted,

Cecille Turley,
Recording Secretary